

Press-Herald

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Who Is the Nitwit?

Once again, a bill has been introduced in Congress to create a federal Office of Consumers. Its announced purpose is to "secure within the federal government effective representation of the economic interests of consumers."

The same measure has been offered twice before, without result. And one can hope that the same thing will happen this time.

The trouble with all such proposals, well-meant as they may be, is that they are based on the premise that a faceless bureaucracy can be trusted to do what is good for us, and that the average consumer is something of a nitwit who is endlessly entrapped and exploited by conscienceless manufacturers, processors, packagers, retailers and all others involved. The also-proposed federal packaging and labeling laws are examples of this thinking. They ignore the fact that existing legislation of long standing, state and local as well as federal, provides adequate and effective protection from the buyer-beware element. They also ignore the more important fact that the housewife is the canniest of buyers who, once misled, does not return to the same well again. As the burnt child dreads the fire, she goes to another product or another store—and those who attempt to exploit her are not long for the economic world.

Beyond that, these proposed laws have their roots in the worst of all philosophies—that there must be a Big Brother who watches over and controls every aspect of life. This is the philosophy that is the enemy of human freedom.

Others Say:

It Tolls for All

The "free speech" and related issues involved in the National Labor Relations Board decision in the General Electric case are now scheduled for review in the Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. The NLRB ruling, which brought forth cries of protest from the nation's press, raised significant questions about the employer's right to communicate with his employees.

Long-range implications of the decision go far beyond one company and one union, Virgil B. Day, Vice President, General Electric Company, said in a recent speech in Cincinnati. "This bell tolls for all," he said.

Clarifying misconceptions about the case, Mr. Day explained General Electric's collective bargaining procedures, which he said follow a philosophy of "truth in bargaining."

"In following this philosophy we exhaustively research and study all the available facts of the issues involved," he explained. "We try to listen, year around, to our employees. We pay careful attention to all the demands brought in by the union representatives with whom we bargain and solicit their help in getting all the pertinent information that bears on our situation."

"During contract negotiations, after weeks of discussion across the bargaining table, obtaining all of the thoughts we can from union representatives, and carefully considering their proposals, we make a full, fair offer. This lengthy procedure is in sharp contrast to the common misrepresentation which portrays us as starting negotiations with a proposal, which we then allegedly refuse to alter. We do modify and have made various concessions on our offers on the basis of new information a union may report, but not just to 'prove' that we are bargaining. In our initial offers, there is nothing held back for dramatic last-minute concessions. We believe that management should approach bargaining with an open mind—but that its mind need not be so open as to be vacant."—Industrial Press Service.

Over \$2 million a year is spent unnecessarily for commercial long-distance telephone calls by government agencies served by the Federal Telecommunications System's leased lines, according to the General Accounting Office. . . . The delay in awarding a fur seal contract to a processor is costing Alaska \$70,000 a week, while the federal government tries to decide who shall process the sealskins. This indecision has now lasted for more than three years, according to Sen. Ernest Gruening, (D-Alaska) . . . If non-defense spending continues to increase at the rate established in 1964, it will mean a doubling of such expenditures by 1975, according to Sen. Roman L. Hruska (R-Neb.) to \$100 billion annually.—Industrial Press Service.

Mailbox

Editor, Press-Herald:

We are writing to ask your assistance with a continuing problem caused by golfers who use the playing fields at West High School. Since the school was built we have permitted golfers to use the fields during the late afternoon and evening hours and on weekends as long as no hazard was created for children or high school students using the field.

Recently, we have found divot marks on the playing fields which could cause a student to turn an ankle or be hit by a baseball traveling over the irregular turf. Golfers have been observed to drive balls from the fence line to the center of the field and then hit the balls from the center of the field back to the fence line.

One of the coaches recently observed a golfer cutting deep divots on the varsity football field.

West High is appreciative of the fine relations with the community and provides for use of facilities by both individuals and teams. Nevertheless, we have an obligation to protect school property and prevent it from being damaged by use in a manner for which it was never intended.

We hope golfers will cooperate with us and drive golf balls only within 15 feet of the fences, and only at such times as not to endanger the safety of others using the field.

Sincerely,
ROBERT R. FORD
Principal,
West High



ROYCE BRIER

War Hawks Only Add to LBJ's Vietnam Quandary

President Johnson's difficulty in Vietnam (which is the American difficulty) stems from two circumstances.

First he inherited a situation from his predecessor, who inherited it from his predecessor.

Second, the situation, or dilemma, begot a group known as War Hawks, who seek to "win" the war by expanding it. (The original War Hawks were members of the Twelfth Congress, 1811-1812, who pushed for hostilities with England and brought on the War of 1812. They reflected expansionist feeling in the pioneer West.)

Mr. Johnson's inheritance has a built-in liability: the South Vietnamese have no respect for their leaders and their leaders are a pro-tem mob who want power, and our money.

The situation gave the War Hawks an excellent staging area. They said we

were losing the war, which is only academically true, as South Vietnam is the belligerent, and that we had never lost a war, which is untrue.

Mr. Johnson is not a War Hawk, but he is an instinctive politician, and knows he has to maneuver them while awaiting a break.

There may be a break in sight. Some peace or truce diplomacy is going on behind the scenes. Its lines of force are obscure, but they are persistent. President de Gaulle has been advocating negotiation and both France and Britain are nervous lest the war get out of hand. The Russians are sure the course of the war would put them in a quandary.

But it may be more significant that there is some contact in Warsaw between the Red Chinese and American Ambassadors to Poland.

Red Chinese talk big about the American brigands, but it doesn't necessarily mean they want a full-scale conflict in the Southeast. They have multifarious economic troubles, and might be undone by a war in which they would have no active allies, not even the Soviet Union.

So the proposal is for a new conference, or technically a resumption of the Geneva talks. The United States has opposed resumption of a new conference on the ground the North Vietnamese violated the terms of the old.

But getting that murky war stopped, and pulling the rug from under the War Hawks, is a great present need of the President, not to mention the American People. What would help is an active push from the British for a truce. We shall see.

WILLIAM HOGAN

Love for Outdoors Shows In New Book by Cammett

Once in a while you will run across a person who really loves the out of doors; and once in an even greater while you will come across a person with this love who can write about it and let a little of it rub off on his fellow man.

Dudley Cammett Lunt is such a man. In his new book, "The Woods and the Sea" (Knopf; \$5.95), Lunt rambles around the State of Maine; he walks through her forests; he canoes on her rivers and lakes; he invades her marshes; and he picks his way through the fog along her wild ocean beaches. And in each element he has a story, many stories, that sing of the wilds, that smell of the good earth, and that portray the peace and the quiet of the wilderness.

Also, he has sprinkled his book with a bit of nostalgia and some reminiscing. He tells of clambakes on the beach and after he describes the preparations under the expert guidance of Uncle Ira you are a little disappointed that he cannot serve up a piping hot steamed clam to top off his description. Another bit of vivid writing is the account of the construction of a fir-bough bed alongside of a slowly flowing river after a long, hard day of canoeing and portaging. The quietness and the aroma of the forest permeate the room.

In these instances, and in

many others, Lunt seems to be not just telling a story, but actually reliving his fond experiences and at the same time presenting a feeling of the wonderful wilderness of Maine.

A lot of strange characters flock to the world's beaches during the summer, but perhaps none was so strange or so interesting as "Sammy," the hero of Nina Warner Hooke's "The Seal Summer" (Harcourt; \$2.95).

Sammy was (perhaps still is) a young grey seal bull who first appeared off Purbeck Island on the Dorset coast of England during May, 1961. For the next six months he not only attracted hundreds of visitors to Chapman's Pool, an inlet on the island, but he made friends with scores of them and furnished Miss Hooke with one of the most delightful animal stories of the year.

While usually it is man that captures and trains the seal, in this case Sammy reversed things and taught human beings what he wanted them to do before he returned to the wilds of the Atlantic ocean.

During that summer the seal was an integral part of Chapman's Pool beach life. He loved to sun-bathe and if he could have his head on someone's lap and at the same time listen to some music, that was the life for him. At first everyone was a bit timid to enter the

water with Sammy, but eventually he got most everyone in and together they played, swam, dived, romped and had a wonderful summer vacation.

Miss Hooke, who is really married and who writes plays and novels as well as true-life stories, is an accomplished writer and she tells about Sammy in a straightforward and charming manner.

Quote

While America believes in freedom, justice, and peace, safety does not come from putting one's head in the sand.—Sen. Thomas Kuchel.

If paid television into homes is illegal, then closed circuit television into theaters is also illegal.—Russell C. Riley, San Francisco.

The American people need spotlights, and flood lights, of knowledge, truth, and integrity to help them recognize essentials in an age of change and confusion.—Thomas M. Storke, Santa Barbara publisher.

Right out of college a girl wants to get married, or so everyone thinks. By the time she's 40 and can devote herself to a career, she's too tired.—Carol Doolittle, Stanford coed.

SACRAMENTO REPORT

Strip, Shower, Exercise, Shower, Dress...It's Law

By CHARLES E. CHAPEL
Assembly, 46th District

Most of the laws relating to public education in California are found in several large law books which are collectively called the "Education Code." Within the Education Code, there is a statute which, in effect, says that every California boy enrolled in a high school must have one hour of physical education, every day that the high school is in session. Of course, a boy can get excused if he has a broken back, a bad cold in the head, or some other excuse acceptable to the faculty.

When the boy reports to his physical education teacher he is first sent to the showers. The boy removes his clothes, takes a shower bath, rubs down with a towel, and puts on his athletic suit. This requires about 20 minutes on an average. Then the boy joins his comrades while the physical education teacher gives the class exercise of some kind or other for about 20 minutes.

This develops a sweat, hence the teacher sends his scholars back to the showers where the lads remove their exercise suits, take a shower, dry down, and get into the same duds they took off at the beginning of this chain of events. When the young California gentlemen get all their buttons buttoned and all their zippers properly zipped, the hour is gone and the law of the once sovereign State of California has been obeyed.

State Senator George Miller Jr. has an answer to this problem. Senator Miller has proposed that we amend the law so that the high school principals, aided and abetted by the physical education teachers, can authorize the same number of hours of exercise, but do it so that it makes sense locally.

For example, the boys could have five hours of baseball, football, basketball, or swimming in the tank, all on the same day. On the other hand, they could have two periods of two and one-half hours each, at the discretion of the principal. Of course when a school district is completely unified, beginning with the first day of kindergarten and extending right up to high-school graduation, the superintendent of the unified school district could make the decision, subject to the approval of the members of the school board. Personally, I think we should let each high-school principal, or each superintendent of a system having a high school within its boundaries, make the decision, all by himself.

I have nothing against school board members, boards of school trustees, and similar elected officials. They are usually underpaid, over-worked, and have my blessing. However, if a principal or superintendent has to put all his decisions to a vote by the board, he never will have time to superintend the faculty and student body. When you hire a good man, let him do a sound day's work for a sound dollar.

If a school board makes the decision about scheduling the hours for physical education, a new problem arises. Former boxers on the board may want the boys to pummel one another. Ex-basketball champions may want all the lads to practice throwing balls into baskets, including peach baskets. This thing could get out of hand.

Whether or not Senator George Miller's ideas ripen into law, I shall and will, in my usual quiet and modest manner, introduce a bill in the Assembly on the same subject. Mine may not be as broad in scope because I intend to write my bill so that it will be very short and simple.

The idea of a boy getting dressed when he gets up in the morning; undressing for exercise; showering; exercising 20 minutes; showering; dressing; and then having to undress again when he goes

to bed at night is just too much stripping for the normal American boy.

The two shower baths every day promotes cleanliness which some people say is next to godliness. It also is good for the water company, soap manufacturers, the Turkish towel industry,

and other segments of our great society.

However, all this bathing does not develop the right muscles or build character. It tends to annoy the victims. Although the high-school boys normally are not old enough to vote, this is not a partisan issue. I am glad to report.

HERB CAEN SAYS:

Simple Lesson In Democracy

SODDEN THOUGHT: One hates to be obvious and even tedious, but how can we pretend to be "democracy's bulwark" in Southeast Asia when we can't even obtain the simplest prerogative of democracy—the right to vote—for some of our own citizens?

Quote: "The tendency of the age is to make machines that do the breadwinning work of men, and then to make other machines to kill those who growl about not getting bread." From an editorial in 1886, commenting on the news that the firing rate of the Gatling gun had been advanced to 1200 shots a minute.

Next time your wife wants to go to an auction, remind her of the time Socrates went to an auction in Athens and returned empty-handed. "I only want," he explained to a friend, "to remind myself how many things there are in this world that I don't need."

SIMPLE STATEMENT: Drinking kills a lot of people, smoking kills a lot of people, autos kill a lot of people. Simple question: What kills all the people who live right?

O brother: The newspapers get all breathless with excitement when somebody like Chubby Checker, or a sports star, buys a \$100,000 mansion." How charmingly naive. Don't the papers know there's hardly a decent house in a high class neighborhood these days priced UNDER \$100,000?

CAENVICTION: Most folk singers should stay home and sing to their folks . . . Easy solutions to hard problems: If everybody went to work at 10 and went home at four, we wouldn't have so much traffic at the rush hours. Next question . . . The only thing worse than riding in a city bus is driving behind one . . . Motorists who are so short they can't see over the steering wheel shouldn't be given driver's licenses . . . I don't know what became of people who said "But good!" and "Only sensational!" but who misses 'em?

WONDERFUL SOUNDS: A symphony orchestra tuning up in the pit . . . "Sir, your table is ready" . . . A full-throated cheer rocketing out of a stadium on a fall afternoon . . . "We interrupt this commercial to bring you 30 minutes of music" . . . Creak of old pilings along the waterfront, flutter of wings as a gull settles on a buoy, wail of a lonely winch on a freighter at midnight for far places . . . "We are ready with your call to Rome—Miss Loren is on the line" . . . A scavenger singing "Vesti la giubba" over the rattle of tin cans at dawn . . . "This ones on the house" . . . Plink, crrrrronk, whirrrr, click, click, click—"Jackpot!"

ITEMS WEST: Pierre Salinger, who'll play a role in the next Doris Day movie, is running exactly counter-clockwise to his ex-rival, George Murphy. Murphy was an actor, a movie exec and now U.S. Senator. Pierre's doing it the other way around and may begin tap-dancing any minute . . . Harvie Ward, two-time nat'l amateur golf champ, is crying like a grown man whose golf clubs were just stolen, and so they were. All he wants back, no questions asked, is a driver, four iron, wedge, and putter. "The thief can keep the rest," he sobs (the bag and the balls) . . . Princess Barbara Hutton, hopefully nearing the end of her long stay at Presbyterian Medical Center, gifted her three special nurses with cultured pearl necklaces, complete with real diamond clasps . . . News from everywhere: The signs at the Nairobi Airport, indicating the air miles to various world cities, point to only one in the U.S.: "San Francisco—9,596 Miles." Our star may be on the wane in certain areas, but we're still very big in Africa.

Morning Report:

As a dutiful citizen, I realize that the state of the President's health is my personal concern. But I think the doctors can skip the details. What I mean is that I'm not interested in the condition of his urine or his lower intestinal tract, as recently reported.

I think his doctors should be interested and tell the President what they find out, or even Mrs. Johnson, if she has a hankering to know.

But ever since President Eisenhower was sick—and ileitis became a national byword—the White House doctors are telling us more and more. I can see the final step: Our President down to his shorts, taking his physical over national TV. Prime-viewing time, of course.

Abe Mellinkoff